ΑΥΩ

The human soul is independent, indivisible, without beginning or end. It migrateth from one body to another. Those who are in all respects free see the Lord; those who are lower abide in the Heavens, and those who are still lower go from one elemental body to another.—*Book of Shet Sasan the First: Desatir.*

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YOGA AND COMMON SENSE.

Simple, straightforward, and beguilingly easy as seems the knowledge presented in the "*Yoga Aphorisms*" of Patanjali—in their American version at least,—it is in solemn fact a pathway of intensest difficulty, indeed almost impracticability, for all but the exceptional few of Western students. Ages of deeply devotional habit, metaphysical training, and passive abandonment to such speculative reflection as Western minds are prone to deem the very antithesis of practicality, have given to the men of the Orient a capacity for such pursuits that we are hardly able to comprehend and certainly cannot emulate. To them, that capacity is an inheritance; for us, it must be a slow and painful acquisition. Our very understanding of the significance of the words employed in conveying that knowledge must be remodelled. "Concentration" does not at all mean, to us, what it does to the Hindu philosophers.

A wise man here and there among us—though knowing nothing of Yoga—has comprehended the advantage of "hindering the modifications of the thinking principle" as an essential to the successful pursuit of knowledge or application of mental energy in scientific or professional

labors. Hence the study of mathematics and the game of chess have been highly recommended as means to that end in disciplining the minds of the young. But the purpose entertained, in such artificial development of the power of concentration of mind, has not gone beyond controlling application of the entire mental force to a particular subject—generally upon the material plane,—and those most proficient in this art have had no conception of the possibility of development, through it, of such psychic and spiritual powers as are contemplated by Patanjali, and would, in all probability, view as extremely undesirable, and perhaps as suggestive of mental alienation, the state which that great philosopher designates as "meditation without a seed." The pressure and thrill of vigorous activity in the physical and mental life surrounding us, and of which we are necessarily a part, tends to cultivate in us a habit of diffuseness of thought, or at best an abnormally vivid perceptivity and a capacity for synchronous pursuit of entirely disconnected and different trains of thought, the very opposite of the "one pointedness" sought in the practice of Yoga. At the same time, if to the observation and comprehension of the mental and psychic results of such "concentration" as has been unconsciously accomplished by our thinkers, as much intelligent effort had been applied as has been bestowed upon the study of the infusoria or calculation of the laws of chance governing recurrence of "hands" at cards, we should generally have recognized, long ere this, how very diaphanous are those barriers to the unseen world through which some of us have been involuntarily stumbling, and perhaps would have sought light for a purposeful direction of our steps thitherward, such as Yoga affords. Ever since Luther, looking up from his deep pondering, saw the devil in his room and hurled an inkstand at him, opinions have been divided as to his action upon that occasion. The credulous devout have said, "he really saw the devil." It is true that beyond that point there has been a still further difference, good Protestants saying "the arch-enemy was properly repulsed," and good Catholics averring "it was a most ungracious reception of his friend,"—but the actuality of the devil is denied by neither. Materialistic sceptics, however, who are in the majority, respond "Nonsense! A plague on both your houses! The man was bilious." The "bilious" theory is by far the most popular in these later days of "light and knowledge." Physicians, as a rule, upon that theory treat cases akin to Luther's coming within the range of their practice and—if possessed of a fair degree of skill—are sufficiently successful to feel confirmed in the hypothesis. In so doing they are like one who, being annoyed by the persistent ticking of a clock, stops it,—by plugging up his ears. He ceases to hear, but the clock goes on ticking all the same. So they accomplish their end of putting a stop to the psychic impressions, at least while the patient is under treatment, and do not trouble

themselves with reflection upon the possibility that they have simply interfered with the conditions through which demonstrations of super-sensual realities were practicable.

A case recently brought to my knowledge is happily illustrative of the psychic effects of unconsciously-applied "concentration", and as such I deem it worthy of mention. A gentleman who is a highly accomplished mathematician and accustomed to such intent application in mathematical operations, in conjunction with astronomical studies, that he at such times quite loses consciousness of his surroundings, became annoyed and finally alarmed by finding that from time to time, when he was so applying himself, pictures of persons, events, and landscapes—not reproductions from memory—forced themselves upon his consciousness and seemed to be vividly apparent to his corporeal sight. He also observed that, in what seemed to him an astounding way, he at times had clear perceptions of the contents of letters before he opened them, and knowledge—subsequently proved accurate—of the personalities of their writers, who were wholly strangers to him. He had sense enough to know that he was not bilious, and the alarming alternative presenting itself to him, by way of explanation, was that his mind was becoming affected. The thought of the astral light did not occur to him, but if it had he would probably have contemptuously dismissed it as a mere fantasy unworthy of serious consideration ; for he is a very positive, hard-headed, big fellow, with not much respect for things that are not susceptible of mathematical demonstration. He carried his trouble to his doctor. Most physicians, upon hearing a statement of his case, would have said : "You need rest and tonics : Take vigorous open-air exercise, abundance of highly nourishing food, and regular doses of iron : Let up altogether on mathematics, and pretty much on all mental effort of an engrossing nature, for a time : try to become as far as you possibly can a perfectly healthy animal, and you will be all right." That treatment would probably have speedily banished the pictures and the psychometric impressions, and he would always afterward, when the remembrance of the affection recurred to him, have congratulated himself upon his narrow escape from "losing his mind." But, as it happened, he went to a physician possessed of the unprofessional and iconoclastic habit of thinking ; one who ventured to believe there were things affecting man that had not been taught in his school. And that man, having heard him, replied complacently : "Yes ; I guess you are all right. Your mind is in no danger from that cause. I have kept the fact to myself, as a majority of people are asses and would probably think me crazy if it were known—which might interfere with my practice,—but I have had plenty of such experiences myself and happen to know a good deal about them." That physician, by years of "concentration" upon his favorite studies, had achieved

the same results as had been attained by the mathematician, and was fortunately capable of recognizing the cause and the true character of the consequent state of being.

While there are undoubtedly many such cases, they are in the aggregate but an infinitely small minority in society, and can only be looked upon as mere indications of the possibilities attainable by even unconsciously-applied and consequently ill-directed "concentration;" and it may not be too pessimistic a view to take of the situation, to believe that few men entering upon this practice—however purposefully and intelligently directed—are justified in expecting much more than such indications, mere outcroppings of the inexhaustible mine to be developed hereafter. For the vast majority of us, particularly such as have reached middle age and established mental habits that are, to say the least, not conducive to rigidly restricted abstract meditation on the radiations of the unthinkable and the like, there is little hope that we will achieve any appreciable success in real "concentration", on the Yoga basis, during our present incarnations. Happily, however, we know that we are not limited to our present earth-lives, and that every step of progress we take in this corporeal existence will be so much positive gain in our next. However long it may take us to reach the goal, our opportunities will not cease until it is attained, and, if our endeavor is earnest, each successive stage on the way will be easier and the advance proportionately greater than in that preceding. And the prize to be won is worth continuous effort through a long series of personal existences, being nothing less than enfranchisement of the Ego; liberation from "the wheel of life."

This reflection is a reminder of another difficulty confronting the Western student of Yoga. Although Patanjali does not so explicitly and emphatically as Sankaracharya or the Bhagavat-Gita enjoin renunciation of desire for the legitimate fruits of good works, yet that is here also expressed with sufficient clearness to be understood as a necessary requirement. But the Western mind, which is nothing if not practical according to its lights, says; "What is the use in doing anything if there is no object in view? and, if the object in view is desirable, how is it possible to intelligently work for its attainment without desiring it?" Comprehension of the sublimely paramount requirement of conformity to duty for its own sake, and unquestioning acceptance of the truth that *all desire is hindrance*, must necessarily be stumbling blocks for most of us in a long time to come, but, like many another hard lesson, must be learned. That renunciation is one of the most important elements of Yoga, one that by its inherency of pure devotion elevates the soul beyond the psychic to the spiritual plane of consciousness.

"Hindering the modifications of the thinking principle," though far short of that Dispassion which is "indifference regarding all else than soul,"

will confer much greater power than the average man possesses—both in mental labors and such glimpses of another plane as have already been spoken of as attained by the mathematician and the physcian,—and that is comparatively easy. One does not need to be very good, or even to have good ends in view, but only a strong will and capacity for sustained effort, to reach that point. Indeed, there are those who, by reason of their peculiar organization, without any particular will or much endeavor, may readily attain the astral plane through self-hypnotization, but their ability is by no means desirable. That plane abounds in real dangers for the untrained and unguided explorer, and can afford little real gratification to one in such a state, since his consciousness is only upon that plane and lacks the permanency of retention as knowledge attainable by the concentrated mind of the Yogin, which does not lose its continuity of consciousness upon any plane that he is able to reach.

It is to be hoped that no member of the Theosophical Society is cultivating strabismus by concentrated contemplation of the tip of his nose, in the vain hope of speedily attaining the superhuman powers spoken of in the third book of Patanjali; or fancying that the adumbrations of his own conceits in the luculent depths of some crystal ball are true visions on the planes of super-sensuous existence. Let us "make haste slowly." If in our present lives we learn to walk firmly in the first four "good levels" of the "eight-fold path," we will do much; all, indeed, that we can reasonably expect. So far as we may, without illusive hopes and self-deceivings, let us follow the guidance of Patanjali, but with the ever-present remembrance that we are, in our present incarnation, only planting seed that Karma will develop into blossom and fruit in more propitious existences hereafter.

J. H. CONNELLY.

FOHAT'S PLAYGROUND.[1]

(A CHILD'S STORY.)

Little Carlo stood alone in the empty nursery. It was twilight of the last day of the year, and stars came leaping one by one into the cold skies. Carlo watched them, a small dark figure outlined by the fading firelight, his black kilts and blouse making him look thin and pale. Over his whole dainty person, as he leaned, slight and lonely, against the window frame, there was that pathetic and indefinable look which every woman knows to be that of a motherless child.[2] It overshadowed the little figure, giving it a gravity beyond its years, that smote the heart of "Uncle John," who at that moment entered the nursery. Carlo turned round with a shout of joy.

1 Fohat–Cosmic Electricity and more. See "Secret Doctrine."

2 See PATH for January, 1889.

"Come here to the fire, you small elf, you"; said his Uncle, folding him in what Carlo called "the bear's hug."

"No, no. You come to the window, Uncle, I want to show you something. Say, do you see that there black spot up there? Now you watch, and, I bet you, you'll see a star pop in there, and then move, and more too. All them others did it, just that way. Somebody must be a going round scratching places with a match, and making stars just that-a-way. What fun he must be having. Don't you think so, Uncle John?"

"I do indeed," said his Uncle, promptly.

Carlo gave a squeal of delight. To find an Uncle, a grown-up person, who says you're right and goes on to tell you more about it,—a grown-up who makes all your fun seem real and true instead of saying "Hush," or telling you something so tiresome that you don't want to know, and cant, *cant*, CANT understand—why; what a New Year's present an Uncle like that is to a boy! Carlo adored his Uncle John; his favorite playfellow, his best friend. He felt that a new and delightful game or story was coming. He jumped on his Uncle, hung round his waist, wrapped his small legs round the Uncle's strong ones, gave a squeeze and a bite of ecstatic affection, squealed again, dropped to the floor, put his small thumbs in his small blouse pockets, set his chubby legs well apart, and then, in this manly attitude, which was as like his Uncle's as he could make it, he tilted his curly head back and asked:

"Well then Siree Bob, who is he?"

His Uncle smiled. A slow smile, just to tease him. Carlo stamped with impatience and butted his Uncle with his head. This was a free mason's sign. It meant that Carlo wanted to be taken up into those broad arms, but was so big now, he was ashamed to say so. Uncle John lifted the little form, cradled the sunny head upon his shoulder, with a suppressed sigh for the sweet young mother and sister whose soft breast would never know the touch of the beloved body of her child. The sigh was too low for Carlo to catch it. He wriggled joyfully, and again asked:

"Who is it lights them stars?"

"It is Fohat," said Uncle John, impressively.

"Fo-hat," repeated Carlo, pleased with the name. "Who's he?"

"Fohat, my boy, is one of the Great Ones."

Carlo already knew some of his Uncle John's "Great Ones," or Great Powers. He called them "those big fellows", himself. They were his giants and his fairies. He chuckled now at the idea of hearing about another. "Is he a very big one?" he asked.

"Fohat," said Uncle John, "is one of the greatest of all the Sons of Light, and the heavens are his playground."

"What does he do in 'em, say?" cried Carlo in excitement. "Tell us about him, quick."

"The heavens, you see, Carlo, are full of stars, and the worlds are full of atoms. Atoms are tiny sparks that only the Great Ones can see; they shine and they live. But where do the stars and the atoms get their life? From Fohat. He touches them, just as you said; he touches them with his flashing diamond spear; a spark leaps from it to them, and that sets them on fire, they burn and live. All the little atoms are scattered through the fields of the sky at the world's daybreak; there they are, soft and milky, white and sleeping, all huddled together like little chicks under the wings of the mother hen. The mother hen of the atoms is the Darkness. Then comes great Fohat, winding along like a serpent, hissing as he glides. He comes upon those lazy little atoms, he pours cold light upon them; they jump up and scatter; they run through the sky. He scatters himself and runs after them in many waves of light; he catches up with them; he blows upon them till they are cold and shivering; this hardens them and they shine. When they shine they are glad, they laugh. All at once, from idle little atoms they become stars, they become souls. Fohat has done it for them. When they begin to shine and sparkle, then they begin to understand. They love Fohat; they move along in a starry dance and sing a song that praises him."

"Fohat likes that, I bet you, *I bet you*", said Carlo in his funny way. "But, Uncle, what is that thing you said? What is a soul?"

"A soul is the spark you feel burning in your heart. Don't you feel it right there?" and the Uncle laid his hand on the boy's heart.

Carlo thought a minute. Yes, he felt it. It was a warm spot down in the place where be felt things. When he felt good or when he felt bad, that was where he felt it. He had another name for it, a name most children give it. "That's my Thinker, Uncle John," he said gravely.

"I know; and that's your soul. I have one too."

"And has Fohat got one?'

"Fohat has the biggest spark of all," his Uncle answered. "He has to have, for he has so much work to do."

"What's he do?"

"Oh! He has so many games up in his playground. He can change himself into ever so many things. Sometimes he puts on a cap of fire and wings of light, and acts as herald to the sunbeams; he leads their blazing march and sings songs of the sun; his songs shine, they are as radiant as the sun and moon. When clouds meet with a loud thunder-call in heaven and lightnings spring out, it is Fohat who calls and drives them on; they sweat, and rain falls on the dry earth. Then he loves to make things. He takes some star dust and makes a daisy; then he makes a big world, or a sun, all on the same pattern. When he is tired of that he becomes the great Propellor, and merrily, merrily, he pushes the worlds along."

"He must be awful busy. Don't he never get tired?"

"Never. Fohat can't get tired. You know I told you the Great Ones never get tired, because they haven't got any bodies like ours to get tired. You know that little spark in your heart don't get tired, but it beats right along night and day. The Great Ones are great splendid sparks like that, and they can think too. Besides, how could Fohat get tired, when he is Motion itself?"

"What's that? What's Motion?" said Carlo.

"Motion? Well; when birds fly, or when you run through the air, that's motion.

"Oh! I know that. It goes fast, fast, and wind blows on your face."

"Well; motion is not the bird. It is not Carlo. It is not the wind that blows on you. It is that going-fast; it is the fast-fast's own self," said Uncle John, gazing into Carlo's eyes, to see if the little fellow would understand.

"Going-fast its own self", repeated Carlo. "I *fink* I know what you mean. I *fink* I don't *understand* it, Uncle John, but I can *feel* it. Will that do?"

"That will do," said his Uncle, delighted. "I often feel things when I don't understand them. My Thinker feels them. Well, then; when you go fast, fast, fast—"

"Awful fast," interrupted Carlo.

"Then it gets hot, it gets hotter, it bursts into fire, on your face, or like the car axles last summer—"

"Oh! I know, or like when you rubbed them sticks together in camp and the fast-fast rub made warm air (I feeled it), and then smoke, and a fire jumped out."

"Exactly." His Uncle, pleased, gave him a hug. "Great and fast going, as big as the world, then fire and light that fills the skies; all that is Fohat."

"But what's he do Sundays? Does he have to sit still then?"

"He does just what he does on other days, for to him every day is a sunday, a day of the sun. And so it ought to be with us too. The great eye of the sun sees us every day; don't let it see us doing unkind things. At night the moon and the stars keep watch. Let them see our heart spark burning bright and clear, not cloudy with dark smoke made by unkind acts or thoughts. If we are unkind, our heart sparks can't help to play Fohat's favorite game."

"What's that, Uncle?"

"At dawn, Fohat calls the Sons of Light together. He says that they must bind all the stars and worlds together with diamond threads. Along every thread blow a soft breath of love and a little note of music; that will make those threads strong. Then when the sons of the shadow come along,

they cannot break the singing threads and scatter the worlds down into the dark. When this is done, Fohat says; 'Now all the stars and worlds are harnessed together; come let us join all the atoms and all the heart sparks of men and women and children together with the shining threads, and we will drive them all.' Then when everything in the whole world is singing and going together, the Sons of Light are glad, they say it is good."

"But sp'ose something kicks up and rears, Uncle John?"

"If it is a star, they cut it loose, and you see it fall. If it is a man or a child, you see that he does'nt go with all the rest. He is lonely; he is unhappy. His heart spark is lonely, and it thinks sad, unhappy things. He is cut loose from the shining rays of Fohat. But, my little Carlo, when Fohat comes to light the Christ-spark in a man's heart with that diamond spear of his, then that man becomes one of the Great Ones, he is one of the Sons of Light."

"Could Carlo be?", asked the smiling child.

His Uncle whispered: "Yes, he could, if he listens always when Fohat, Son of Light, speaks through the silent speaker in the heart. You do not hear its voice with your ears, but it speaks; it thinks, and you understand."

"Sometimes it sings in there," said the boy. "It sings when Carlo loves you."

"May the Sweet Law bless your golden heart, my Darling. For it *always* sings when we love."

That night when Carlo fell asleep he was smiling. He had fallen asleep listening to the song of Fohat. J. CAMPBELL VERPLANCK.

ZODIACAL CHRONOLOGY.

Among the Chinese a knowledge of astronomy existed at a very early date. The Shoo King or the Historical classic is justly regarded as being the most ancient authentic record of the annals of the Chinese Empire. This was complied by Kung-fu-tze (Confucius) about the year 500 B.C. from materials which existed in the temples in his time. In the year 220 B.C. during the reign of Che-hwong-té, all the books in the empire were ordered to be burnt and the literary men buried alive, a proceeding which caused as great a loss to the Chinese civilization as the destruction of the Alexandrian library several centuries later caused to the West. Fortunately this sanguinary monarch was succeeded by one of a different character. In 178 B.C. Wan-té ascended the throne, and his first effort was to restore learning. As no copy of the Shoo King was to be found, he had recourse to an old man of ninety years, who in the reign of Che-hwong-té had been one of the chief

literati, and who to escape death had put out his own eyes and feigned idiocy.[1] This sage had the Shoo King so firmly imprinted upon his memory that he was able to repeat it word for word. A scribe was appointed by the emperor to take it down, and thus the sacred book was recovered. A remarkable confirmation of the accuracy of Fuh-Sang occurred a few years later, when the residence of Confucius was pulled down and a copy of the Shoo King was found hidden in the wainscot, written in the ancient character, which copy was almost literally the same as the book then in use.

The Shoo King is an authentic history of China, commencing with the reign of Yaow, B.C. 2356. It is a sober, careful narration of events, and bears internal evidence of its truth. According to this, Yaow was a wise and meritorious sovereign. He appointed two officers of state named He and Ho to superintend the calendar and astronomical instruments and make known the time and seasons. In the words of the text, "he then commanded He and Ho in reverent accordance with the motions of the expansive heavens to arrange by numbers and represent by instruments the revolutions of the sun and moon and stars with the lunar mansions, and then respectfully to communicate to the people the seasons adapted for labor. He then separately directed He's younger brother to reside at Yue, where he might respectfully hail the rising sun, adjust and arrange the eastern or vernal undertakings, notice the equalization of the days, and whether the star culminating at nightfall was the middle constellation of the Bird in order to hit the center of mid-spring. He further commanded He's third brother to reside at the southern border and to notice the extreme limit of the shadow when the days attain their utmost length and the star in the zenith is that denominated Fire, in order to fix the exact period of mid-summer. He also commanded Ho's brother to dwell in the West and notice the equalization of the night, and see whether the culminating star was Emptiness (Beta in Aquarius) in order to adjust mid-autumn. And he directed Ho's third brother to dwell in the north and see whether, when the days were at the shortest, the culminating star was the White Tiger (Pleiades), in order to adjust mid-winter."

It has been estimated that the Bird (or Cor Hydra) really did appear on the horizon at night-fall of the vernal equinox in the time of Yaow, and that by the precession of the equinoxes something more than 4000 years would be required to bring this star into its present position, thus verifying the accuracy of the Shoo King. The close of Yaow's reign was B.C. 2254, which added to 1889 would be 4,143 years.

Without going into further details, of which a great deal more is given in the Shoo King and other Chinese canons, sufficient has doubtless been

1 The Shoo King, Translated by W. H. Medhurst, Shanghae, 1846.

given to prove that astronomy was actually in use at as early a date as 2350 B.C. The lunar zodiac of 28 houses is often referred to in the classics.[1]

It may also strike the investigating reader that these astronomical references in the Shoo King are given, not as something new at that epoch, but as something that was well understood, as already existing, and as a part of the ordinary business of the realm. If that be so, and we find astronomy already brought to some degree of perfection in China two thousand years before Christ, the question naturally arises,—how long previously was the human race in discovering the principles that govern the heavenly bodies? How many thousands of years were passed in acquiring even that degree of knowledge, in growing up from savagery and absolute ignorance to a condition of comparative civilization? These are questions which are necessarily embarrassing to the bigot. Formerly it was customary for religious writers to claim that Man was endowed with scientific knowledge by the Deity which made him, but the discovery and subsequent adoption by intelligent people generally of the law of evolution rendered that assertion no longer valid as an argument. The disposition now among the clergy is to ignore all chronology, or to treat it as a non-essential. They certainly will not discuss it with any degree of fairness or honesty. I will therefore only add, in passing, that the period comprised in the books of the Shoo-King, commencing B. C. 2,356 and running down to B. C. 769, covers the time to which is generally referred the Flood of the Hebrew Scriptures. Assuredly there is no mention of the Flood in the Shoo-King. And all passages which have been quoted by Christian writers as corroborating the Biblical narrative are certainly references to what were merely local inundations.

Hence there is only one conclusion: that the generally accepted date of the Flood 2348 B.C. is erroneous. There is one other reflection that inevitably occurs to every thinking mind in this connection, and that is that, at this date, besides the presumably ante-diluvian nomadic tribes mentioned in the book of Genesis, there were vast empires, densely populated and brought to a fair degree of civilization, which appear to have already run their cycle of greatness and to have begun their decline. These nations were all proficient in many features of the science called astronomy, and certainly they all employed the symbolic figure of the heavens known to us as the Zodiac.

Hindu astronomy has found numerous commentators, mostly critical, in the West, but it can afford to wait in patience for a recognition of its just

1. NOTE—It is fully established that the Chinese possessed a lunar year which they regulated by the solar year of 365¼ days (Ideler, 214). Regarding their mythology, the tradition is that Pu-an-Ku, the primeval man, came out of the mundane egg and lived 18,000 years. Then came the reigns of heaven, the reigns of earth, the reigns of man during myriads of years; and it is said that Sui-Shin, one of these old rulers, discovered fire, took observations of the stars, and investigated the five elements. (Bunsen, Vol. IV.)

claims. Perhaps the best example of the Hindu Zodiac is that one found in the vault of the pagoda of Salsette (Elephanta), the construction of which dates back to 1192 B.C. The Zodiac itself, however, far antedates the temple, and although numerous attempts have been made by European astronomers to discredit its antiquity, none of these have yielded satisfactory proofs. There is no denying the stubborn fact that the summer solstice is marked as occurring in Virgo, which by easy calculation can be shown to have been the case nearly 20,000 years ago.[1]

From time immemorial the Brahmins have been acquainted with the precession of the equinoxes, and even calculated the rate at 54 seconds per annum, which was very close. And as for the Zodiac itself, they even gave the signs the same names which we now employ, and arranged them in exactly the same order. But that is no more surprising than the fact that the Hindus have the same period of the week that we have, divided into seven days, dedicated to the same planets, and in the same order as ours. When these awkward coincidences were discovered some years ago, it was claimed that the Hindus had copied from the Greeks, and much ado was made over the claim that Alexander the Great had carried astronomy into India at the time of his invasion. Now, however, there are few Western scientists, even among the professed champions of orthodox religion, who care to repeat that threadbare tale. The lunar zodiac of 28 mansions undoubtedly gave rise to the division of time which we call the week, or one-quarter of the moon's journey, and the lunar zodiac is universally allowed to have preceded the solar zodiac by many ages. Although there may be no means of knowing just what tribe of the human family first produced the zodiac, it is a fair hypothesis to suppose that the Aryans were the inventors, as they and their descendants, even down to the Americans of the nineteenth century, have always shown the greatest versatility and capacity for progress.

Let us now turn to Chaldæa, where, according to Josephus, the wandering Sheik Abraham was instructed in astronomy and astrology, which he subsequently taught to the Egyptians. Here we are on even more solid ground. The labors of George Smith, Layard, Lenormant, Rawlinson, and others have opened up to us a long vista of history which was formerly classed as prehistorical. Following is the text of one of the creation tablets as given in the "Beginning of History:"

1. NOTE—The process of calculation is as follows: We know that at the present day the sun is in the constellation Pisces at the spring equinox (March 21). As there are twelve signs of the Zodiac comprising the entire circumference of the heavens, and the sun makes the whole circuit in one year (viz: the earth goes round the sun in that time), it follows that he apparently passes through one sign each month. Hence he must be in the constellation Gemini at the summer solstice (June 21) corresponding to the sign Cancer, which is usually given in the almanacs. But in the Salsette Zodiac the sun is represented as being in Virgo, which is three signs distant, and, according to the rate of precession of one sign in 2156 years, there would be required 6,480 years to arrive at this position.

"Excellently he made the mansions, twelve in number, of the great gods.

He assigned them stars, and he established fixedly the stars of the great Bear.

He fixed the time of the year and determined its limits.

For each of the twelve months he fixed three stars

From the day when the year begins until its end.

He determined the mansions of the planets to define their orbits by a fixed time

So that none of them may fall short and none be turned aside.

He fixed the orbits of Bel and Ea near his own.

He opened also perfectly the great gates of heaven,

Making their bolts solid to right and to left:

And in his majesty he made there himself steps.

He made Nanna the moon to shine, he joined it to the night.

And he fixed for it the seasons of its nocturnal phases which determine the day, etc."

The above tablet, according to a further inscription, was the property of Asser-bani-pal, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, who reigned 670 B. C. It was undoubtedly a copy of an earlier inscription, probably Accadian, which descended along with other legends of the Creation, from the most remote times. It is sufficient to show that astronomical knowledge existed among the Chaldæans at a vastly ancient period. Many of these cuneiform inscriptions date back to more than 2,000 B.C., and they show a surprising degree of knowledge to have been common long previous to that period. In George Smith's "Chaldæan Account of Genesis" it is stated that, judging from the fragments discovered, there were in the Royal Library at Nineveh over 10,000 inscribed tablets, treating of almost every branch of knowledge existing at the time. These inscriptions, being traced upon clay tablets which were then baked, formed a record which outlasted all other methods except monumental, of perpetuating human thought. The letters could not be effaced by time, although, as unfortunately happened, the tablets were liable to be broken.

About 2,000 B.C., there was a famous monarch in Babylon called Sargon. He was a patron of learning as well as a conqueror. He established a great library at Aganè, and caused a work in astronomy and astrology to be compiled which remained the standard authority on the subject up to the end of the Assyrian Empire. It was called the "Illumination of Bel," and was in 72 books. The Izbudor Legends, containing the story of the Flood and the history of Nimrod, were probably written at least as early as 2,000 B.C. These legends were in 12 parts corresponding to the 12 signs of the Zodiac, and, in fact, are supposed to have described alle-

gorically the passage of the sun through the Zodiac, just as the adventures of Osirus in Egypt and the labors of Hercules in Greece depicted the same idea. At any rate it is a natural question for us to ask; if the Chaldæans 2,000 years B.C. were so enlightened and amassed such enormous libraries, how many thousand of years before that were they employed in laboriously achieving this literary eminence? Knowing how gradual were the changes in national thought in those earlier ages, we can hardly estimate too long a time for that process of self-evolution.

Among other interesting mementoes of long by-gone ages, there is preserved in the British Museum the fragment of a celestial planisphere whereon may be read "Month of arahshannan, star of the Scorpion." Not less positive evidence is the astronomical inscription which makes the "star of the Goat" preside over the month of tobit, and the "star of the Fishes of Ea" over the mouth of Addar.[1] Macrobius is authority for the statement that, according to the Chaldee astrologers, at the very day and hour when the motions of the heavenly bodies began the Sun was in Leo. Now, the very latest date when the position was attained at the vernal equinox was 10,000 years ago, and the entire circle of precession might have been travelled around many times previously for all that we know. Whether or not the chronology of the Chaldæan priest Berosus was correct cannot of course be determined. He enumerates the following:

Antediluvian period - - -	432,000 years.
Reigns of Evechvos and Chomasbelos -	5,100 "
First Chaldæan dynasty - -	34,080 "
Latan dynasties - - - -	1,758 "
	472.938 "

The planisphere at Dendera, Egypt, has been much discussed, and many astronomical writers who should know better have claimed it as a comparatively recent production. Yet here is the translation of the inscription on the temple: "King Thothmes III has caused this building to be erected in memory of his mother, the goddess Hathor, the lady of An. The great ground plan was found in the city of An, *in Archaic drawing on a leather roll*, of the time of the successors of Horus; it was found in the interior of the brick wall on the south side of the temple in the reign of King Pepi."

It is evident from this inscription that the zodiacal architecture of the Dendera temple originated in the remotest antiquity, as it was only unearthed in the reign of King Pepi of the sixth dynasty, being at that time an object of antiquarian interest. Subsequently in in 1600 B. C. Thothmes III restored the temple, and Ptolemy in 120 B. C. again restored it, and doubtless

1 Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia, Vol. III.

at that time introduced the Greek characters which have proved such a stumbling-block to modern investigators.[1] Regarding Egyptian history Dr. Brugsch, one of the most careful of commentators, says: "Only of late have the monuments, once again brought to light and awakened to new life, torn aside the deceitful veil revealing the truth, and furnishing the evidence, that in the times of classic antiquity the history of the ancient Egyptians was already an uncomprehended book like that of the seven seals. The "table of Kings" of Sagguarah and Abydus, both containing a selection of the Egyptian monarchs from the first Pharoah, Mena, onwards, give us the most authoritive evidence, now no longer to be doubted, that the primeval ancestors of the Egyptian dynasties, the Pharoahs of Memphis, must be recognized as real historical personages, and that King Ramses II, about 1350 B. C., the Sesosttris of the Greek falulous history, was preceded by at least 76 legitimate sovereigns; that is to say, in other words, there were so many generations of men who lived during a space of time which was greater than the sum total of the years that have elapsed from Ramses II down to the present day."[2]

Nor does this include the dynasty of the gods which preceded the Kings. Previous to the reign of Menes, the Papyrus of Turin and other documents assign a period of 5613 years to twenty-three reigns, to which is prefixed a still further period of 13820 years during which the later Egyptian gods figured as rulers.

Gerald Massey says: "When first seen, Egypt is old and gray, at the head of a procession of life that is illimitably vast. It is as if it always had been. There it stands in awful ancientness, like it own pyramid in the dawn, its sphinx among the sands, or its palm amid the desert.[3]

Bunsen, in his great work, "Egypt's Place in Universal History," arrived at the conclusion that the earliest zodiac in use in Egypt was at the time when the sun was in Scorpio at the vernal equinox. By a simple computation we learn that that position was occupied by the sun about 17,000 years ago.

He also gives the following table as representing the first cycle of history:

Appearance of mankind in Central Asia	20,000	B. C.
Inorganic language formed - -	15,000	"
Catastrophe in Central Asia - -	10,000	"
Separation of East and West Asia - -	5,000	"
Era of Babylonia Empire - . -	3,784	"
Era of Uenes - - - -	3,059	"

1. Note.—Sir William Drummond made a minute examination of the zodiac at Esne, Egypt, and calculated from the vernal equinox being between Gemini and Taurus, and therefore giving a retrogression of three signs from their present places, that the age of this zodiac would be 6450 years from the time he wrote or 6528 years from the present time.

2. History of Egypt under the Pharoahs.

3. A Book of the Beginnings, by G. Massey, London, 1881; 2 vols.

Lest all the above evidence be rejected too hastily by those people who are inflexible in their determination to record the year 4004 B. C. as the date of Creation, I will close this necessarily brief summary with a reference to the geological testimony of the antiquity of man. In an interview held only a few weeks ago with Sir Richard Owen, that distinguished scientist is reported to have said: "My own opinion is that the oldest evidence that bears upon the question of man's antiquity dates back his existence to the Tertiary period, 18,000 years ago. Weapons and the like have been found. There is no method of authoritatively interpreting what might seem to be older evidence. I have spared no pains to justify this opinion by personal inspection." We see here the effort of the scientific writer to be conservative in his statements. He regards the date of 18,000 years ago as settled by satisfactory evidence; beyond that there are many indications of man's existence, but the exact data are still wanting. Sir Charles Lyell in his "Antiquity of Man" hesitated to name any exact dates: he assigned his specimens of human bones and weapons to certain geological periods in the remote past. Yet in regard to the Natchez skeleton he admitted that it might lead to the conclusion that America was peopled more than a thousand centuries ago by the human race. In another work he remarked that "if all of the leading varieties of the human family sprang originally from a single pair, a much greater lapse of time was required for the slow and gradual formation of such races as the Caucasian, Mongolian, and Negro, than was embraced in any of the popular systems of chronology."[1]

Prof. Agassiz estimated the age of the skeletons found in the coral reef of Florida at 10,000 years. The skeleton beneath the fourth cypress forest of New Orleans must, it is said, have been buried there at least 50,000 years ago. (Dowling). Works of Egyptian art have been dug up from soils which must have been submerged 30,000 years ago, and bricks are found 60 feet deep under layers which would require 14,000 years to cover; yet, says Lesley in his "Origin of Man," "these are mere modern matters in comparison with the diluvium of Abbeville. My own belief," he says, "is but the reflection of the growing sentiment in the whole geological world, that our race has been upon the earth for hundreds of thousands of years." In his chapter on "Early Races of Mankind," Edward Clodd estimates the rate of growth of the stalagmites in the Torquay caverns to be one foot in 44,640 years. As some of these are five feet in thickness, they would require 223,200 years to acquire their present state of formation. Yet underneath those, there is a layer of charred wood, called the "black band," which yielded hundreds of flint tools, a bone needle, burnt bones, remains of hyenas, oxen, bears, etc. There is the cave-earth with relics of a like kind,

1. Principles of Geology, page 660.

and then we come to the lower bed of stalagmite, which contained bones of the cave-bear only, and which is in some places more than double the thickness of the upper bed, and requiring at least 500,000 years for its formation. It is underneath these that in the solid mass called breccia there were found, mingled with immense numbers of teeth and bones of the cave-bear, flint implements which without doubt were shaped by the hand and skill of man."

In the light of these astounding results of scientific investigation, the chronologies of Berosus and Syncellus in Chaldæa, and of Simplicius, Laertius, and Capello in Egypt do not appear so mythical as they have been heretofore generally supposed.

And if we take an enlightened view of the subject, we must see that hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of years must have been required by the human race in the process of its evolution from the lower types to even the most ancient of civilized races, even if only to the point where a knowledge of the motions of the planets through the Zodiac was first acquired. And we know that many thousands of years have since then elapsed.

G. E. W.

To Those who Suffer.

Last night I saw in dream, a man. He was weak, poor, an exile ; his feet were torn, his wounds bled, his heart bled also. He cried out to heavens that were brass ; they sent forth a dull reverberation, a sullen thunder, in reply. Around him was blackness ; in his soul was a grim despair. This wretched, hunted, abandoned creature gazed wildly about him, finding nothing upon which Hope might rest, not even Death, for he knew he could not die before his time. All Life passed before him as he stood at bay, and mocked him in every tongue.

I heard a sigh as if some one beside myself grieved at this piteous spectacle and, turning, I saw One who seemed to be a guide of the country, and to whom the sufferer appeared to be known. Of him I made inquiry.

"Can no one help that man?"

"Oh yes. There is one who can help him."

"Who is that?"

"Himself!"

"Why does he not help himself, then?"

"Because he suffers so much. His suffering engages all his attention."

"What, then, is the cause of this great suffering?"

"Himself," said the guide, and smiled. This smile revealed a divine pity, more tender than tears. It opened my heart, so that I said :

"Teach me more of this strange Self which is at once his persecutor and his Savior."

"Nay," replied that guide; "thou shalt ask thyself that question, for that self is thee also, and every other man as well."

Then I awoke, understanding very well that we suffer from ourselves, And I could see, too, how each man was the sharer of the experience of others, for is there not that rare, tenuous æther in which every human sphere is suspended, feeling every current, every thought, every struggle of all its neighbors, of the whole vibrating mass, and translating every vibration into thoughts of its own quality in the wonderful mechanism of the human brain? Could I not see well how these thoughts, in their dynamic and formative energy, moulded that æther into pictures which lived, moving along currents that were baleful or beneficent in their action upon other spheres, according as they caught the tone of the mass, or failed to reach it? This tone was given by the Great Law Itself as the appointed chord to and by which all spheres should be regulated, in order to vibrate in unison, and, where any sphere failed to do so, vibrating at its own choice and out of time and tune, the whole æther was violently agitated, its current of light rendered turbid, its melody disturbed, destroyed. Well I saw that what was mainly required for the restoration of harmony was that each human sphere should accept without resistance the great currents of the Law as these impinged upon it. Of course at first, many of them would suffer internal confusion from this sudden change of motion; they would experience Pain, and even disintegration in some parts. Let those who had the courage so to suffer for the restoration of general harmony would soon find a new and higher form of organization crystallizing within themselves, just as the music of the master's bow causes the sand particles to thrill and to range themselves in ordered patterns of beauty, or as at the magnet's mysterious message iron filings range themselves in the same polarized lines as those of the human brain. Yes; what was imperatively needed was that every human creature should stand still long enough to feel the currents of Law sweeping through his life, and then think with and obey them. In other words, the first step is Resignation.

In the year whose last sands slip by as I write, many cries have fallen upon my heart. That heart suffers like every other. This truth gives to each heart the divine right to understand all the rest. We hear the cry of the exile, and out of our own experience we respond to him. There are so many cases. There are the comrades who wish much to do and to be. They desire greatly to work in the Altruistic Cause. Karmic circumstance fetters them. So they devise plans whereby they may be made richer, or stronger in body, or more free from care and duty, or to gain more ample time in which to work. But that Karma which they themselves have made, and which is their only judge, refuses them these things. Then a deep

sadness falls upon them with the failure of their plans; their energies are sapped and wasted by the thousand allies of doubt and despair. They forget that their plan is not needed. What is greatly needed is Harmony. This is only attained by submission. When we accept Karmic Environment and go calmly to work to take an inventory of ourselves as we now are, both externally and internally, in all our mental states and Ever Changing Motives, and then ask earnestly what such a man, in such a given condition of life, can do, just where he stands and as he is, to help Humanity, we do find an answer somewhere. We do find some work to our hand. It may be only in Right Thought that we can help, but in that dynamic power we work silently along with silent nature and the Great Vibration, whose melodies are real, are profound, and heard by the inner ear alone. In thus spreading the fluidic far-reaching energies of harmonious thought upon the ambient æther, we create currents in accord with those of that Universal Mind whose grand totality is "Angels and Archangels and all the Powers of Heaven." Is this a small power? Not so. By its means we change our whole mental environment; and that in turn will order future Karmic circumstance so that in the next life, or perhaps even in this, we shall be placed where we can help our fellows more. That help is their due and our privilege. But I think we place undue stress upon material help. The heart of man is at the bottom of every circumstance. It moulds every event, builds up all societies, determines the character of every age. Reforms that do not reach that strange and hidden heart are built upon the sand. Nothing can reach it but Right Thought, and it is in the gift of every person to turn that reconstructive power loose upon the wild turmoil of our time. This is the Light that stills the waves. Instead of chafing at our limitations and our failures, let us then accept them with harmonious serenity and use them as our instruments. Thus I know a sick person who uses the sympathy, evoked by that sickness as a means of gaining the attention of others to higher thoughts. I know a comrade in great poverty who realizes that this very poverty gains the ear of those likewise suffering, and of those too who think much of the material gifts they can bring, and so this brave soul drops a true brave word here and there on the thorny way. By acceptance of Karma we learn great and wonderful things, and a master has said: "Karma is the great teacher. It is the wisest of guides and the best."

This does not mean that we should sit down supinely and think only. It means that we should accept the inevitable in material life, and gather what spiritual riches we can find, in order to give them all away.

Then, again, come the sufferers through Love, the hearts that cling to the personal sweetness, the strong human ties, the thousand endearing tendencies often cemented by a long, though unknown, Past. Death, separation or Life, sweeps between. Or the Beloved suffer, and we cry out.

We cry in ignorance. Our Love is never lost. Every Universe makes for Love: that Love is Harmony, is Justice. Not one vibration of it is ever lost. Out of our deep spiritual nature this yearning Love comes pouring, an eternal fountain. Our personal mind translates its meaning in many perverse ways. We take it to mean all kinds of personal desire or hope. That we belie our nature is evident because, when these desires are gratified, the heart is never content with that, but goes on to new desire. It is the sacred truth that, in the very ground of our natures, a spark burns ever in the vibration of the highest Love. All our small personal affections are simply the straying tendrils of this one great root, and ought to draw us inward to it. Our Love rests in the highest bond. We do really desire the highest fulfilment of the loved one's Being. We can, if we will and if we seek, find ourselves consciously reaching up in hope to the perfection of those beloved natures. It is really the Higher Self, the great Ideal One, that we love. The man or woman, Its faint reflection, is there to lead us to this blessed Truth. Alas! We find self far too much in so called love, but I believe,—in all conscience I can attest it—that once we get a glimpse of this truth, that our inner natures yearn to help our Beloved to greater heights, we will make a mighty effort to continue in that higher, holier hope. From thus loving one, to loving all, we proceed gradually through the pure overflow, or the natural gravitation of Love, until we know nothing of Separation. For all starved natures there is then this hope. We are not to love less, but to love more. To expand to fuller conceptions; to realize deeper meanings; to find within the self of flesh and sense, and all the selfish corruption of our natures, these germs of living truths; these meanings we have indeed perverted, but which we are powerless to destroy, because they are germs of that Truth which is One and indestructible, the "Law which makes for Righteousness", the Harmony which is Love.

Those who suffer will find at the very root of their suffering, no matter of what kind, some revolt against this Eternal Law of Love. We have only to turn round and obey it. We have only to cease desiring to put it to personal use, or to grind personal comforts out of it, and all its blessings and powers are ours. It lives in every heart; it gilds and glorifies every atom; it "stands at the door and knocks;" it is Life, it is Light, it is Peace, for it is Eros, the one Ray, it is universal, divine Love. Oh! my suffering comrades; accept it, embrace it! Live by it, at any cost; die by it if needs be, for so only shall we find Life eternal, only by receiving and acknowledging the Law: only by living in the thought of all beings, in harmony with all and with Love.

JASPER NIEMAND.

Velocity and Motion.

The modern student of physics, when asked what is meant by velocity, answers from his prompt memory, "Velocity is space divided by time." The answer is quite characteristic of the present age of science. "Take that to the calculators", was the contemptuous reply which Faraday made when somebody proposed a question for him to solve which called for no discernment of any hidden principle but was merely one of quantitative determination. The practical aspect, the quantitative aspect, the material aspect,—that is what the world is now chiefly concerned with. But to come to a right way of looking at things is an exercise in which this age does not show much talent; it has not quite been able to realise the value of so doing. Perhaps in its future development science will become a little more metaphysical and a little less materialistic. Surely the purely physical mania has fairly had its turn by this time; it has long been in possession, and might now well give place to something better. It is time for people to recognize that what is abstract and invisible is not therefore unreal, but on the contrary a degree more real and substantial than what is outward and palpable.

The teaching given to a science student whence springs the reply cited above is of a simple kind, and such as may be explained to all comers in a few words. Velocity, so termed in technical phraseology, is the same thing as speed, and is said to be the relation between *space* or distance traversed by the moving object and the *time* occupied in so doing. The relation between *one mile* of space or distance and *one minute* of time is accordingly the velocity of an express train going, as they say, "a mile a minute". Sixty miles an hour would be just the same ratio otherwise expressed. But the express train making ahead at full speed is not the only type of motion and velocity. There the speed is regular, uniform, and unvarying; at least it is so as far as we can perceive. But the motion of a stone dropped from the roof of a house has quite a different character; in this case the motion is not uniform and unvarying, and the only element of regularity in the movement is the way in which it becomes continually *faster and faster*. This being so, to ask "What was the speed or velocity of that falling stone?" would be an unreasonable question unless some particular instant were defined to which the question should apply. It would, however, be quite an intelligent question if one asked, "At what velocity was it moving *at the instant when it struck the ground*?"

Now let us reflect a little upon the foregoing considerations. An instant is to time exactly what a geometrical point is to space; indeed an instant is often called a *point of time*. Like the geometrical point, it has

"no parts or magnitude"; all notion of *how long* is entirely foreign to it. How is it, then, that we can speak of the velocity of a falling stone *at that instant* when it touches the ground? Assuredly, *at* any instant, no actual motion whatever takes place; no space is passed through, neither is any time occupied. The difficulty before us is this. The scientist declares that velocity is "the space divided by the time", and yet here is a case in which we are forced to recognize velocity though neither space nor time (in that sense) enters into the question at all. This is what Dr. O. Wendell Holmes called "sticking a fact" into the lecturer; and it is a very sharp-pointed fact too. It shows that amid the enlightenment of this age (to the wise it is notorious as the Dark Age) there exists some want of reflection among scientists on the subject of velocity and motion; it shows that the philosophy of the modern scientist is of a sort that does not go to the bottom of things.

There are some persons, generally of the number of the learned whose heads are "replete with thoughts of other men", who have great difficulty in grasping this idea of an absolute instant, simple as it is in itself. These people give one a great deal of trouble in discussion; they insist on regarding an instant as an "infinitesimally short *period*" of time. It is as bad as if they told the geometer that his mathematical point was not an element of *no* magnitude, but an element of *infinitesimal* magnitude. But in truth a geometrical point is absolutely devoid of magnitude, and similarly an instant is not a "period" of any sort or description. To sum up this parenthesis, an instant is not anything *during* which either motion or any other change can occur. "*During* an instant" would be a self-contradictory phrase; an instant does not endure.

Let us now pause to review the position and examine the conclusions with which we are confronted. From the case of the falling stone it is made evident that a moving object has a velocity *at* an instant (when such elements as distance traversed and time occupied can have no existence); and also, in this example at least, it is found that velocity cannot be conceived of at all *except* as existing at this or that instant. For the velocity of the stone changes within the smallest fraction of a second; whatever it is at one moment, it will not be that at any succeeding moment. What, then, is to be the next step in our reasoning? If it has been established that velocity does exist at an instant, shall we imagine that it has a different character in the case of the express train maintaining an even speed? Or would it not be much reasonable to hold that velocity was the same sort of thing in all moving objects, whether their movement was uniform or accelerated? Surely nobody can hesitate to accept this latter view together with its consequence, *viz.*, that velocity is *not* "the space divided by the time", but has an existence where these two elements are altogether

excluded. In other words, velocity is an inherent condition of the moving object itself, and is not in any sense a dependency of motion. Indeed, this s borne out by the use of language; for we discuss the velocity *of a bullet* (not that of a bullet's *motion.*)

Here perhaps some more subtle representative of the age will tell us that he would never make the assertion that velocity was identically the ratio of the space traversed to the time occupied; he would prefer to say that velocity was *measured by* this ratio. That certainly would be an accurate statement. But it leaves an empty gap; because now we have no prescribed answer (for the student to learn by heart) upon the question, What *is* velocity in itself? Do examiners never ask the question, "What is velocity?" Or do professors never explain how such a question should be answered? It is very odd if they do not, because velocity is such an elementary topic; and it is the boast of the really able professor, as opposed to the charlatan, that he thoroughly understands the very roots of his subject, and lays the foundations of knowledge in his pupils so that the vast superstructure shall not totter.

Another scientist might say, perhaps, that velocity was a quality, attribute, or property of motion; for motion may be quick or slow.

Would anyone have the courage to say that velocity was the *principle* of motion, the *cause* of motion? Will anyone dare to say that velocity is something internal and hidden, of which motion is the outward and visible sign? If present science does not say so, peradventure future science, more metaphysical than its predecessor, will have the boldness.

Physical science, emphatically physical and non-metaphysical, cares too little for that INSTANT in which no change ensues, but in which something *is* and *tends.* Paradoxical as the statement may seem, that instant is a better realisation of eternity than the most gigantic sweep's-brush of centuries jointed together within the imagination. But apart from this, it is the right aim of science to pass from effects to the recognition of their hidden causes; and the scientist who aspires to a higher wisdom should make a study of an instant, to find in it what is causal. A wonderful theme, in truth, is that instant, planted in the midst of time and yet itself no portion of time, a zero containing in itself the principle and cause of what passes in time. Assuredly we have not yet come to an end of man's store of meditable matter.

E. ALDRED WILLIAMS.

OF STUDYING THEOSOPHY.

It is often asked: How should I or my friend study theosophy?

In beginning this study a series of "don'ts" should first engage the student's attention. Don't imagine that you know everything, or that any

man in scientific circles has uttered the last word on any subject; don't suppose that the present day is the best, or that the ancients were superstitious, with no knowledge of natural laws. Don't forget that arts, sciences, and metaphysics did not have their rise with European civilization; and don't forget that the influence of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of ancient Greece is still imposed upon the modern mind. Don't think that our astronomers would have made anything but a mess of the zodiac if the old Chaldeans had not left us the one we use. Don't forget that it is easy to prove that civilization of the highest order has periodically rolled around this globe and left traces great and small behind. Don't confuse Buddhism with Brahmanism, or imagine that the Hindus are Buddhists; and don't take the word of English or German sanscrit scholars in explanation of the writings and scriptures of eastern nations whose thoughts are as foreign in their form to ours as our countries are. One should first be prepared to examine with a clear and unbiassed mind.

But suppose the enquirer is disposed at the outset to take the word of theosophical writers, then caution is just as necessary, for theosophical literature does not bear the stamp of authority. We should all be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us, and we cannot do that if we have swallowed without study the words of others.

But what is study? It is not the mere reading of books, but rather long, earnest, careful thought upon that which we have taken up. If a student accepts reincarnation and karma as true doctrines, the work is but begun. Many theosophists accept doctrines of that name, but are not able to say what it is they have accepted. They do not pause to find out what reincarnates, or how, when, or why karma has its effects, and often do not know what the word means. Some at first think that when they die they will reincarnate, without reflecting that it is the lower personal I they mean, which cannot be born again in a body. Others think that karma is—well, karma, with no clear idea of classes of karma, or whether or not it is punishment or reward or both. Hence a careful learning from one or two books of the statement of the doctrines, and then a more careful study of them, are absolutely necessary.

There is too little of such right study among theosophists, and too much reading of new books. No student can tell whether Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* writes reasonably unless his book is learned and not merely skimmed. Although his style is clear, the matter treated is difficult, needing firm lodgment in the mind, followed by careful thought. A proper use of his book, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, and all other matter written upon the constitution of man, leads to an acquaintance with the doctrines as to the being most concerned, and only when that acquaintance is obtained is one fitted to understand the rest.

Another branch of study is that pursued by natural devotees, those who desire to enter into the work itself for the good of humanity. Those should study all branches of theosophical literature all the harder, in order to be able to clearly explain it to others, for a weak reasoner or an apparently credulous believer has not much weight with others.

Western theosophists need patience, determination, discrimination, and memory, if they ever intend to seize and hold the attention of the world for the doctrines they disseminate. WILLIAM BREHON.

TEA TABLE TALK.

A correspondent sends "two dreams which came true in every particular." She says: "I don't tell them as being wonderful, but because I would like to have an explanation as to how an event could be impressed upon one's consciousness so long before it happened, and would like to know, if it is the "shadow" of the "coming event" in the Astral Light which I happened to stumble against, how it came there? Number 1.—I dreamed one winter of a bridge,—a high, arched bridge crossing a stream which was bordered with trees and young shrubs clothed in the tender green of early Spring. The sun was setting, and its slanting rays fell upon the water in such a way that it streaked it with gold and crimson light. I particularly noticed the branch of a tree which had been partly broken, and the leaves of which having partially died, their yellow hue presented a striking contrast to the other foliage. On the bridge stood three people, close together, looking over the parapet. The centre one was myself. On my left was one whom I felt—(the "I" in the picture, I mean; there is a double consciousness about all these experiences of mine which makes it difficult to be exact in telling them)—to be my dearest friend, though I (the one on the bridge) did not see her face. On the right was a gentleman whom the "I" on the bridge appeared to know, but the "I" who was dreaming did not. The whole thing was so vivid that I spoke of it the next day to the afore-mentioned friend. The following Spring, unexpectedly to us both, we together visited Washington, D. C., and a friend of *my* friend one afternoon drove us out to Cabin John's Bridge, where we had dinner, and afterwards *just at sunset*, walked upon the bridge, and, stopping to look over the parapet, there was every thing as I had seen it, even to the broken branch with the yellow leaves!

About the same time I dreamed that my friend and I were upon an ocean steamer. We simply looked around and then got off again. Sure enough, while in New York before proceeding to Washington, my brother asked us to visit one of the steamers, which we did.

Dream No. 2. was as follows: My friend's sister, who was living in Colorado, removed to this city and went to house-keeping with her mother and sister; her husband, who was a physician, not being able to follow until he had settled his affairs. I had never seen him nor heard him described, but his wife being tall, and I having been told that he was an unusually intel-

ligent man, I naturally formed the idea that he would be tall and fine looking. One Monday Mrs. C. told me she expected her husband on Thursday. That night I dreamed that I saw a man,—a short man, not handsome, but with a pleasant, intelligent face. He was smiling, and I said "Who are you, and what are you so pleased about?" He replied, "I am Dr. C., and am pleased because I shall be able to leave two days before I expected." He had a moustache and a short beard, and while he was speaking the *beard* dropped off, leaving him with only the moustache! The next day I told my sister all about it, but meeting my friend simply said I had dreamed the Doctor would be here two days before he was expected. That afternoon Mrs. C. came in and said, "Are you a witch? I have just had a telegram and the Doctor will be here to-night!" Now comes the funny part;—the next day I went to the house, and was introduced to Dr. C. He *was* a short man, looked *just* as he did in the dream, and wore no beard, only a moustache. I afterwards asked his sister-in-law if he had ever worn a beard, and she said he *always* did, but Wednesday morning he took it into his head that the sun had faded it, and had it shaved off!"

When the poet wrote that "Coming events cast their shadows before," he expressed, intuitively, a scientific fact. All that is or was exists in the Astral Light, and in so-called "Dream" the soul looks into that light, it may be on the higher or on the lower plane of it, and sees past, present, or future events there. Sometimes these are clearly reproduced upon the brain and to the waking memory; sometimes they get mixed up with other things upon the passage back to the waking state, or are confused by physical and other vibrations, and then the image presented to the waking mind is blurred and fantastic. In regard to the question, "how they came there," full explanation is not possible. Terms and knowledge are alike wanting in which to explain such a great mystery. For it is a mystery to the mlnd; it must be seen to be known. What can be said is that the Astral Light is the universal mirror; it contains the patterns of all things; in it are all forms as well as pictures of all events. Whatever *is*, is first posited there as a centre of energy, and forms the mould for the objective form or event. It may be stated that this "mould," or this positing—this coming into subjective existence of the thing which is afterward to have objective existence—is effected by the impress of the idea *upon* the universal substance by the universal mind, or cosmic ideation. In the same way, but in minor degree, the human brain makes pictures in the æther of all its thoughts, pictures more or less vivid according to the amount of energy which clothes them. This is caused by the formative power of Thought, just as vibration causes crystallization, or makes patterns in sand or iron filings placed upon glass, by means of sound.

A correspondent who has had dreams which came true, relates a painful one to us and asks (A.) If it follows that this one will come true because the others did, and, (B.) if the painful event can be prevented or any action taken to stop the persons dreamed of from taking the course seen in dream, which had such a sad ending.

A. It by no means follows that any given dream will come true because

others have proven so. It may come true, or it may not. But decidedly it is best not to think of it as coming true, or to think of it at all, because pictures of it, clothed with more or less energy and life, are thus made in the Astral Light and may impress sensitive persons.

B. In regard to this question, it cannot be too clearly stated that the Course of Law cannot be stayed. If an event is to befall one, no person can prevail against the karmic circumstance. At the same time, it may only threaten, and it may be the karma of some outsider to step in and prevent the accident or the misfortune. It is then clearly our duty to do what we can to avert the danger or suffering of another, and, having done what we could, to dismiss the result from our minds. All we have to do or can do is our duty. To this duty all altruistic effort is related. Having done it, we should dismiss all anxiety for the result, and calmly accept the course of Law.

Another F. T. S. says. "At the theosophical meetings which we have been holding lately, there has been present a lady, not a member of the Society, but rather one opposed to Theosophy, although interested in the deeper thought of the time and prepared to look fairly at any question which may come up. She has an unusually clear and sane mind. She also dislikes phenomena, or rather, the discussion of phenomena. A day or two after attending our last meeting, she visited the home of one of her sisters. While there, she was confined to her bed with some slight indisposition. One day, while her sister was out, the bell rang and a caller left her card. While this was occurring, the invalid distinctly saw the caller, although there were solid walls between them, and found upon her sister's return that her description was accurate in every detail, and yet it was a person quite unknown to her.

The above, coupled with a little experience of my own, not to mention things now being constantly spoken of in the daily papers and ordinary social chat, leads me to be somewhat less of a "doubting Thomas" than formerly, and to look without a feeling of condescending amusement and incredulity upon such matters. The experience was this,—slight, of course, but still interesting. While dressing for dinner recently, I laid my shirt studs, cuff buttons, &c., upon my bureau. Later I took them up again, but found that one stud was missing. This is a common occurrence with me, and I began the usual search, not omitting the floor, although confident it had not been dropped. Finally I said to myself rather jestingly, "I guess one of Julius's elementals has been around here and hid the blamed thing. So I will look exactly where I know I put it, and not finding it give up the search. Perhaps in a few minutes it will become visible." So I again looked carefully where I felt certain that I had placed it, being especially certain on account of my very methodical habits and the unlittered condition of the bureau, that I was making no mistake. It was not there. I then proceeded to brush my hair, put on my tie, &c., &c., and then looked again. I could hardly believe my senses when I saw it just where I had been looking. Perhaps I was a trifle "off," but I don't think so.—(P. J.)"

Why our friend should attribute the elementals and their action to "Julius," as if these were figments of our brain or phantoms due to Tea Table

indigestion, we cannot imagine. We should be sorry to answer for most of their pranks, and beg to state that we do not endorse, any more than we invent, them, while yet their action is undoubted. In some cases they are centres of energy in the Astral Light, which centres are roused into greater activity by our thoughts, often unwittingly projected upon them.

JULIUS.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

AMERICA.

CHICAGO T. S. At the Annual General Meeting of this Branch on December 8th, 1889, after the conclusion of the formal business, Mr. B. Keightley addressed the members on the subject of the Society's work in Europe, its prospects in the future, and the duties incumbent on members and Branches.

In reply to questions he gave some practical suggestions as to methods of work and as to the best means for dealing with the difficulty of Branch work in very large cities.

AURORA LODGE T. S., of Oakland, Cal., met Nov. 22d and organized and adopted By-laws. Officers elected are *Pres.*, Theo. Ed. G. Wolleb; *V. P.*, Miss Marie A. Walsh; *Sec.*, Henry Bowman, 951 Broadway. A council of 5 was constituted. Regular meetings will be held on 1st and 3d Fridays of the month, and open meetings every Sunday evening in the Jewish Synagogue. The first open meeting has been held, at which Miss Walsh read a paper on "Aims of Theosophy," which was followed by much inquiry. A library was started with 25 of the most desirable books on Theosophy, and more are promised. H. BOWMAN, Sec'y.

THE NEWLY-CHARTERED BRANCH at Kansay City, Mo., has organized by the election as President of Judge Henry N. Ess, and as Secretary of Mr. Chancy P. Fairman, 1328 Grand Ave. The meetings are held on Wednesday afternoons, and 2 new members are already reported.

ABRIDGMENTS OF DISCUSSIONS. Of the *Abridgments of Discussions* issued at intervals several years ago, No. 1 is out of print, but the General Secretary has a few copies of Nos. 2, 3, and 4, and a somewhat ample supply of No. 5. They have been superseded by the *Forum*, yet they contain much interesting and instructive matter, especially valuable to new students of Theosophy. Both because such literature should be put to use and because these leaflets are rapidly shop-worn, the Aryan T. S. desires to place them in the hands of such F. T. S. as have not already received them. It is therefore purposed to make as many sets as the supply of the four existing numbers permits, and a set will be mailed to any F. T. S. enclosing a 2 cent stamp for postage thereon. No charge has ever been made for the *Abridgments* themselves. Applicants will be served in order, and, when the full sets are exhausted, later applicants will receive such partial supply as remains. They will always have value as holding material for Branch questions and discussions. Address, Box 2659, New York P. O.

SAN FRANCISCO. Theosophists here have gotten out a very good 8 page pamphlet entitled "Theosophy and the Theosophical Society," designed to tell what it is, its objects, origin, and its present state. They are sold for 1 cent a copy by Dr. Allen Griffiths, 13 Mason St., San Francisco.

THE NEW "LIGHT T. S." of Fort Wayne, Ind., has organized, but will for the present be conducted as a private Branch.

THE VEDANTA T. S., Omaha, Neb., has elected as President Dr. J. M. Borglum, and as Secretary Mr. T. Richard Prater, Room 205, Sheeley Block.

MR. BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY'S TOUR.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY who has so long assisted H. P. Blavatsky in theosophical work in London, came to New York last month and has been visiting the various Branches. He is now fairly started toward the Pacific coast.

In Boston he spent some days and had many private conferences.

In New York two large meeting of the Aryan T. S. had him present, and at one listened to an instructive address on the Society's objects and work in general.

He visited Washington, and a public meeting was held there, at which some 150 persons were present.

Chicago was next visited, and, as there are two active Branches in that city, very interesting meetings were held. From there he went to Cincinnati to visit Dr. Buck, and then to Omaha.

In Omaha, on Dec. 16th, a public meeting was held at Sheeley Block and was well attended. The objects and work of the Society were expounded, and details given about Col. Olcott's work in Japan. The daily papers of Omaha devoted considerable space to the subject, and gave it and the lecturer fair treatment, the *Republican* closing thus: "The Society has a cart-load of tracts which will be *given* to any one who desires to study theosophy." The brethren in Omaha have been benefited by interchanging views with Bro. Keightley.

Grand Island, Neb., came next, and the visit of Mr. Keightley had been well advertised in the local papers. Several private conferences were held and one public meeting. From here Bro. Keightley goes on to the Pacific, where it is expected there will be many public and private meetings. We have no reports yet.

AT A SPECIAL OPEN MEETING of the Nirvana Branch T. S. which was held in the Masonic Hall, Bro. Bertram Keightley (Madame Blavatsky's Private Secretary) addressed an appreciative audience of about two hundred persons. He had entire sympathy, and held the audience spell-bound for more than an hour.

He then stated that he would answer any questions which might be propounded, and several availed themselves of the privilege. The questions were sensible and deep, and showed a great deal of theosophic study, and were all answered to the satisfaction of the questioners. There were five entertainments in our little town at the time (besides this), and a more intelligent appearing audience would be hard to find.

NATHAN PLATT, Sec'y.

THE BROOKLYN T. S. expects before long to secure rooms which will be open daily to all interested in the objects of the Society. The success of this plan is indicated by the regularly large attendance at the weekly meetings, and by the earnestness of the members of this Branch.

INDIA.

THE CALL FOR A MEETING of theosophists in Bombay in December, issued by the General Secretaries of the Indian Sections, meets with general approval. This conference will have no legislative functions; but it is felt that if it be well attended by representative theosophists from various parts of the country any resolutions passed by it will have great weight with those in authority. The programme of the proceedings has not yet been arranged, nor the actual day fixed. The latter will depend upon the meeting of "Congress," which body assembles also at Bombay about Christmas, as it is desired not to choose the same days, since many of the delegates to Congress are Fellows of the T. S.

The news from Ceylon is of a very encouraging nature.

ADYAR, Nov. 20th, 1889. R. H.

LITERARY NOTES.

IL CONVITO, THE BANQUET. This great work of the greater Dante has been translated into English for the first time by Miss Kate Hillard, F. T. S. (*1889, Kegan, Paul, Trench, & Co., London.*) Dante gave it the name *Convito, a Banquet*, to signify that he wished to entertain and nourish all who chose to partake of it with the food of wisdom. The poet was over 45 when he wrote it, and in its pages may be found many autobiographical hints as to his mental life. The translator remarks that many parts of it "seem like studies for the larger canvas of the *Comedia*; here we have the prose which afterwards develops into poetry, and an idea hard to understand in the finished terseness of the poem we sometimes find in the *Convito*, both amplified and explained." Dante here refers often to "the lady" who is, as he says, "that lady of the intellect who is called Philosophy," and in her face "we see things which show us the joys of Paradise;" and this "lady" is identified by him with the Logos of the Christian Evangelist present at the creation of the world, and her offspring are Faith, Hope, and Charity. He exalts virtue and good deeds with duty well performed, holding riches in low esteem, for "he who amasses them gains not content but greater greed;" true nobility springs from the nobility of soul and cannot exist apart from virtue.

Almost following the *Bhagavad Gita*, he says there are two paths to happiness (or perfection), one through the field of action and the other through contemplation; but, unlike Krishna, he prefers the latter. The mind of

Dante, though sad, was great; the depth and shadow of his eye with its sorrowful cast but showed the weight of his past incarnations in which he had gained much; for does he not say, as may be understood by the occultist, "who enters here leaves hope behind"? Not understood by others, still less could he comprehend himself; but he never could resist, had he tried, the power of the Ego confined within his mortal frame. The translation is admirable, and is enriched with notes and quotations referring to the *Divine Comedy* and the *New Life*.

THE THREE SEVENS, by The Phelons, was in Dec. PATH inadvertently stated to cost 50 cts. It will cost $1.25 and have 284 pages, bound in cloth.

ZADKIEL'S ALMANAC 1890 has been received from the publishers, London. 6 pence.

RAPHAEL'S ALMANAC AND EPHEMERIS for 1890 is as usual full and interesting. Foulsham & Co., one shilling. There are many weather prophecies and hints on gardening from an astrologer's point of view.

The 9th number of the Révue Thèosphique is even more excellent than usual. It contains a very clear article entitled "The Astral Plane in the Physical Plane," which seems to present the matter well to the average understanding. The following extract from H. P. Blavatsky's continued article on "Alchemy in the 19th Century" will interest some of our readers. "The public begins to highly value Eliphas Levi, who alone knew, in truth, more probably than all our great European Mages of 1889 put together. But when once one has read, re-read, and learned by heart the half-dozen volumes of the Abbè Louis Constant, how far advanced will one be in practical occult science, or even in kaballistic theories? * * * We know several of the pupils of this great modern magician, in England, in France, and in Germany, all earnest persons of unshaken will, several of whom have sacrificed years to these studies. One of his disciples paid him an income, during more than ten years, giving him besides one hundred francs per letter, during enforced separations. This person, at the end of ten years, knew less of magic and of the abbala than a Kchela of ten years under a Hindu astrologer! We have these letters on magic in several manuscript volumes, in the Adyar Library, in French, and also translated into English, and we defy the admirers of E. Levi to name a single person who has become an occultist, even in theory, by following the teachings of the French sage. Why, since it is evident that he had had these secrets of an initiate? Simply because *he never had the right to initiate in his turn.* Those who know something of occult science will understand us; pretenders will contradict us and hate us the more for these hard truths." Other articles are translations, reviews, and so forth.

GIFTS TO INDIA.

The American Section may well be congratulated on the munificent gift of £200 which the General Secretary was privileged to remit to Col. Olcott on Dec. 6th, on behalf of a member of the Aryan T. S. One-half of

this is to be invested in the Permanent Fund, the other half to be applied to running expenses. Nor is this all. On Dec. 13th still another draft went to Col. Olcott, this time for $85.50, $50 of which was from an anonymous contributor. We are told in Holy Writ that "the liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." If envy is permissible, it must be when one encounters an F. T. S. who has such a soul and the means to express its liberality.

THE TRACT-MAILING SCHEME.

The list of coadjutors has now lengthened to 60. Several gifts of money have been received since the issue of the Dec PATH, and several brethren offering time have thus been set to work. For all of this and other kind aid, the General Secretary makes grateful acknowledgment.

THE ARYAN PRESS.

The attention of our readers is drawn to the fact that the Aryan Press is now in full working order, and prepared to promptly execute all orders which may be received,--Bill heads, Circulars, Address Cards, and every description of Commercial and Private Printing undertaken at cheap rates.

The Aryan Press being a Theosophical Co-operative Press, all members and Branches subscribing $10 are entitled to have their work done at cost price.

Orders to be sent to "THE PATH" Office.

We would call the attention of our readers to our amended price list of publications on cover, which will be found to contain several alterations and additions.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

DR. SETH PANCOAST died in Philadelphia, Pa., on the 16th of December, 1889, of heart disease. He was one of the first Vice-Presidents of the Theosophical Society at its foundation in New York in 1875, and was a member at the time of his death. His collection of books upon Kabalism and other occult subjects was unexcelled, and his knowledge upon such matters was extensive. He had in preparation a book upon these important studies which, he informed the Editor of the PATH, was intended to be one of the most important of this century. Now that he has passed away, we are at liberty to say that he was one of those who foretold to us the revival of interest in theosophy and occultism that began in 1878 and has now become patent to everybody.

The heavens are without rent or seam, and the revolutions of the spheres create heat.—*Dabistan.*

OM.